

LANCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

To the Chairman and Members of the Lanchester Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting the Interim Annual Report for the year 1946. It has been a satisfactory year judged from the "vital statistics". A low deathrate, low infant mortality rate, low tuberculosis deathrate, and an absence of deaths from the seven principal infectious diseases is pleasing to record. There were no special causes of sickness during the year.

The low incidence of diphtheria and the absence of deaths from this disease is a pleasing feature, and amply justifies the immunisation campaign over the last ten years.

It is unfortunate that circumstances beyond the control of the Council do not permit new houses to be erected to meet all demands, as fast as one would like to see them, but the Council do their utmost under the difficult circumstances.

I take this opportunity of thanking all members of the Council for their unfailing support of all matters tending to improve the general health of the district, and my colleagues in other Departments who have in any way assisted toward the same end.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

J.G. WALKER.

Medical Officer of Health.

LANCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Interim Report of the Medical Officer of Health
for Year Ending December 31st, 1946.

Summary of General and Vital Statistics.

Area in Acres	44,243
Population (Census 1931)	16,413
Population (Mid-year 1946)	14,490
Number of Inhabited Houses according to rate-books	4,123
Reduced Rateable Value	£67,279
Sum represented by a penny rate	£253
Births during the year	259
Birthrate	17.8
Deaths during the year	158
Gross deathrate	10.9
Infantile Mortality-rate	12
Tuberculosis Deathrate	0.27
Pulmonary Tuberculosis Deathrate	0.20
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis Deathrate	0.07
Zymotic Deathrate	NIL.

Special Causes of Sickness.

There were no special causes of sickness during the year.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

	Total.	M.	F.	
Live Births (Legitimate)	252	130	122.	Birthrate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population, 17.8
Births (Illegitimate)	7	3	4	
Totals...	259	133	126	
Still Births (Legitimate)	10	5	5	Rate per 1,000 total (Live and Still) Births 37.1
Births (Illegitimate)	-	-	-	
	10	5	5	
Deaths from all Causes	158	88	70	Deathrate per 1,000 of estimated resident population, 10.9

Deaths from Puerperal Causes:-

No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis	Nil)	Rate per 1,000 total (Live and Still) Births 3.7
No. 30 Other Puerperal Causes	1 }	

Deathrate of Infants under one year of age:-

All Infants per 1,000 live births	12.0
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate live births	13.0
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	22.0
Deaths from Measles	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years)	Nil

Population Estimated by the Registrar General (1946) 14,490

CAUSES OF DEATH IN LANCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT, 1946.

Causes of Death	Males	Females.
All Causes:-	88	70
1. Typhoid and para-typhoid fevers	1	1
2. Cerebro-spinal fever...	1	1
3. Scarlet Fever..	1	1
4. Whooping Cough	1	1
5. Diphtheria	1	1
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	2	1
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis	1	1
8. Syphilitic Diseases	1	1
9. Influenza	1	1
10. Measles	1	1
11. Acute polio-myelitis and Polio-encephalitis	1	1
12. Acute Infantile Encephalitis ..	1	1
13. Cancer of Buccal cavity)	3	1
Cancer of Uterus)	1	1
14. Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	1	3
15. Cancer of Breast ..	1	1
16. Cancer of All other sites	13	6
17. Diabetes	1	1
18. Inter-cranial vascular lesions..	9	14
19. Heart Disease..	22	20
20. Other Diseases of Circulatory System...	3	2
21. Bronchitis.....	6	4
22. Pneumonia	2	3
23. Other Respiratory Diseases	1	1
24. Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum...	1	1
25. Diarrhoea (under two years)	1	1
26. Appendicitis...	1	2
27. Other Digestive Diseases ..	1	1
28. Nephritis	3	1
29. Puerperal and Post-abortion Sepsis	1	1
30. Other Maternal Causes	1	1
31. Premature Birth	1	2
32. Congenital Malformity, Birth Injuries etc.,	2	1
33. Suicide	2	1
34. Road Traffic Accidents	3	1
35. Other Violent Causes ..	3	1
36. All other Causes...	11	5

Zymotic Deathrate.

There were no deaths from the principal infectious diseases during 1946. The Zymotic deathrate was Nil. The rate for the Administrative County was 0.16.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE.

There were 11 deaths of infants under one year of age compared with 16 last year, which gives an infant mortality rate of 42.0 This is below last year's rate which was 61.0.

Infant Mortality Rate	- Lanchester Rural District	42.
"	" " " - Administrative County	44.
"	" " " - England and Wales	43.
"	" " " - 148 Towns with Population 25,000 to 50,000	37.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN
THE AREA.

Public Health Officers of the Authority:-

- (a) Medical Officer of Health, John G. Walker, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
D.P.H.

Whole time Officer for the Joint Areas of Lanchester Rural
and Consett Urban District Councils.

- (b) Sanitary Inspectors:-

G. Rowe, Certificate of S.I.B., and Meat Inspectors Certificate.
(Senior Inspector).

F.E. Terry, Certificate of S.I.B. and Meat Inspectors Certificate.

50% of the above Officers Salaries are payable from County Funds.

Clerk:- K. Robertshaw.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and other Diseases.

There were 214 notifications of infectious diseases
(other than Tuberculosis compared with 116 in 1945. Measles was
again prevalent and accounted for 153 cases of the 214.

Disease	Number of Notifications	Number Admitted to Hospital.
Erysipelas	5	-
Scarlet Fever	11	11
Diphtheria	5	5
Puerperal Pyrexia	3	3
Pneumonia	9	2
Enteric	1	1
Measles	153	2
Whooping Cough	25	-
Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	2	2
TOTALS...	214	26

Non-civilian cases are not included in these figures.

Enteric Fever.

One case of Enteric Fever was notified during the year.
This case and two notified during 1945 were linked up with an
intermittent carrier who was employed as a Cook in a Colliery
Canteen. Appropriate steps were taken to deal with the carrier
concerned, and no further cases have occurred from that source.

Scarlet Fever.

There was a slight increase in cases compared with 1945,
11 cases against 6. The type of case was mild and free from
complications. There were no deaths.

Diphtheria.

There were 5 cases notified during 1946 compared with 3
in 1945. Of the 5 patients contracting this disease:-

2 were over 15 years of age

2 were over 5 and under 15 years of age, and one
of these was an immunised child.

1 was under 5 years of age - not immunised.

DIPHTHERIA NOTIFICATIONS AND DEATHS SINCE 1932.

Year.	Cases Notified.	Deaths.
1932	16	2
1933	26	4
1934	63	8
1935	48	10
1936	66	5
1937	91	12
1938	60	4
1939	7	-
1940	5	-
1941	12	-
1942	10	-
1943	14	-
1944	11	1
1945	3	-
1946	5	-

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION CAMPAIGN. - The results of the measures taken have been satisfactory. The adjusted figures at the end of 1946 were:-

Children under 5 years receiving two doses of A.P.T. in 1946
= 213.

Children 5-15 years receiving two doses of A.P.T. in 1946,
= 36.

The following are the percentages of immunised children in your area at the end of 1946:-

Under 5 years - 40%
5 - 14 years - 80%

Strong efforts are being made to increase the numbers in the lower age-group. Reinforcing doses were given to 17 children.

SCABIES.

There were 50 actual cases and 59 contacts treated in their homes during the year. A number of these cases were complicated by other skin conditions, e.g. impetigo. The number of families involved was 30, and in eight of these it was found to be a re-infestation.

The cases were widespread throughout the area, Burnhope, Lanchester, Hollinside, Cornsay Colliery, Esh Colliery, Quebec, Langley Park, Waskerley and Castleside, all furnishing cases.

On receipt of information from Schools, Health Visitor or Doctor, the 'homes' are visited and appropriate advice and treatment furnished.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of new notifications during 1946 was 13, the position is shown in the following table, which gives the notifications etc., since 1938.

Year	Notifi- cations	Pulmon ary.	Non- Pulmon ary.	Deaths.	Recovered.	Removed from Area.
1938	24	16	8	3	9	5
1939	20	8	12	7	6	3
1940	11	7	4	7	2	-
1941	24	15	9	5	-	2
1942	15	10	5	6	5	4
1943	15	10	5	4	4	7
1944	14	4	10	4	3	2
1945	24	14	10	8	8	3
1946	13	10	3	7	1	5

The state of the register at the beginning of 1938 was 87 pulmonary and 56 non-pulmonary cases, at the end of 1946 the corresponding figures were 59 and 51.

The housing of tubercular families has received attention in your district for many years, and whilst war conditions have slowed up the process of re-housing, owing to the cessation of building, families in bad circumstances are re-housed as and when opportunity presents itself.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY.

Acute shortage of supply from the Water Board's mains was evidenced at Burnhope village during the year, the high elevation of the village, its dependency on a storage reservoir on one hand, and what now appears to be, in consequence of past years housing developments, a supply pipe which is too small for the needs of the village, especially the houses at the highest end.

The nett results is houses without water during the day and a reliance upon a mere trickle supply which is only available during the low demand period about midnight. The houses involved having low pressure heating systems, baths, and W.Cs, produce great inconvenience to the householders, and recourse has to be made at certain times, to a delivery of water by tank waggon of the Board..

The solution to the problem is an enlarged water main, and making all allowances for shortage of materials etc., it is hoped that the Board will find it practicable soon to effect this very necessary alteration.

A suggestion for the installation of booster pumps is practicable, but costly, and then it is opinioned that the capital and maintenance cost of such a scheme would be better utilised in the replacement of the existing main by one of a larger diameter.

Under the provision of the Rural Water Supply and Sewage Act, 1944, a scheme to link the mains north to south from Tow Hw to Rowley, across the western portion of the district was submitted to the Ministry. This area although not one of congested housing, is one part of the area not served by a mains water supply, and being principally concerned with milk production, causes producers to rely upon small springs, most of which are unreliable from a bacteriological aspect, and necessitates sundry schemes of pumping, or in other cases the supply has to be carried.

In past years, the crux of the difficulty in providing a mains supply in the area always rested upon the potential income, and as this may never justify the capital outlay, the proposals invariably fell through. From a public health standpoint however, if this argument is always sustained, then the public and milk production aspect of the district must always be doomed to a water supply system which is both archaic and undependable.

It is hoped that the time is not far distant when financial grant will enable the agriculturalists in this area to enjoy the amenity of a safe, sufficient and suitable water supply.

Public Spring, Springwell, Butsfield.

During the year, this supply, which serves four properties, including a milk-production farm and a small-holding, was being considerably fouled by cattle who were required to be watered there. In consequence, the spring was housed in a closed chamber, a delivery pipe provided for the clean collection of personal supplies, and the overflow conducted to a watering trough near the highway for the use of cattle.

Chiney Hall Farm, Rowley.

The incidence of open-cast coal mining in this area wrecked the spring water supply to this farm which was licensed

for Accredited milk production. Following a joint meeting with all concerned in the matter, the contractor of the Ministry of Fuel was obliged to lead a daily supply of water to the farm, a condition which still obtains until a permanent alternative supply is found. Incidentally, the proposed mains scheme between Tow Law and Rowley would cater for this farm, unless some alternative scheme presents itself.

In the normal course of routine examination of spring water supplies, 38 samples were submitted for bacteriological examination during the year. In many cases these samples related to proving a satisfactory supply for a farm engaged in milk production as a preliminary to pumping and storing the supply for domestic and agricultural use, but, in some cases the spring in use is unfit bacteriologically and there is no alternative water supply, in fact, in most cases there is no alternative to the existing supply to these premises, which it will be understood, are not within the orbit of a mains water supply at present.

An analysis of the sample results are as follows:-

	<u>BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULT.</u>		
	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Unfit.</u>
Individual Houses & Farms... ..	12	2	12
Public Springs..... ..	7	-	2
Piped supplies examined in course of Typhoid case enquiry..... ..	3	-	-

DRAINAGE.

No major schemes of drainage were carried out by the Council during the year, beyond those associated with housing schemes at Burnhope and Lanchester.

Approval to proceed with the extension of the Lanchester Sewage Works was received during the year, the scheme costing £7,430 having been deferred on the outbreak of war.

Continuing our policy of having suitable drainage provided to remote premises in order to instal the water carriage system of sanitation as against the conservancy system, a few more cases have been dealt with during the year to fulfill this intention.

Renewed drainage with disposal consisting of a septic tank and filter for the premises concerned were completed at the following premises:-

Bleach Green Cottages, Langley Park.
Park Head Farm, Castleside.
1 & 2, South View, Castleside.
Malton House Farm, Quebec.
Click-em-in Farm, Quebec.
Branch Villa, Lanchester.

Properties connected to a public sewer as against crude disposal:-

The Lodge, Lanchester.
Satley Villa, Satley.
Park House Villas, Colliery Offices
& Stobillee House, Langley Park.

Premises completely re-drained to sewer by reason of defective drainage:-

Front Street, Burnhope (4 properties).

Amended drainage layout was effected to the following premises:-

Fleece Inn, Castleside.
East Farm, East Butsfield.
16, 17 & 18, High Street, Hamsteels.

In pursuance of this and works of drainage, 186 visits of inspection were made in relation to matters associated with new work and the routine matters of complaint.

CLOSET ACCOMODATION.

During the year the total of W.C.'s in the area were increased by 38 due to new housing schemes, 30 by the Council, and 8 by Private Enterprise), while 7 conservancy type closets were converted to W.C.'s in addition.

The bulk of the conservancy type of closet remaining in the area are those concerned with property scheduled or ear-marked to be cleared as and when we can deal with such property.

The revised figures of closet accomodation for the area are:-

Total number of W.C.'s	3295
Total number of Ash-Closets	696
Total number of Pail-Closets	15
Total number of Ash-pit Privies	284
Total number of privies	74
Total number of Chemical Closets	3
TOTAL	<u>4367.</u>

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

As usual, difficulty was experienced in obtaining contractors for that part of the district let by contract, so that with this position we do meet with a certain amount of 'take it or leave it' where the more remote districts are concerned. Labour shortage, and more alternative, , probably more congenial work, produce this circumstance, in that it is not unexpected that complaints of neglect show a tendency to increase rather than decrease.

During the year, we had to terminate the contract for Holmside and Peartree districts on account of persistent neglect since it is conceived that the stipulated fine can be paid without difficulty from other more remunerative work performed by the contractor and so the fines are shorn of their corrective effect.

Waskerley village was another district where irregular collection was manifest, although having a tenant farmer to do such work, when the calls of farming dictate how so much time shall be used, is hardly the type of contractor best suited for regular collection work. Unfortunately, in this district, there is no alternative at the moment.

The tendered prices showed the usual increase, not unexpected with rising costs, and the average price per house was £1 - 0 - 5d, and an increase of $3/8\frac{1}{2}$ on last years average price.

A problem which loomed large in the sphere of refuse removal, was that of stone-spoil, issued with miners domestic coal issues. It has always been associated with such coal in small degrees, but now that the yield is as much as one hundredweight per load, the problem has become serious. It is our contention that such material is not house refuse, so that unsightly deposits of stone-spoil in all conceivable places of the villages, and especially in the villages of Burnhope, Quebec, Hamsteels, Esh and Cornsay Colliery, is gradually becoming an eyesore.

Unfortunately, the miners agreement is for unscreened coal, so that the Owners stipulate they fulfill their part by issuing the coal specified, while the householder, recipient is faced with disposing of the accumulation of spoil. After various representations to the Owners, they decided without prejudice to their case, to clear up the accumulations in these streets. This expedient was in operation at the end of the year, but, the solution to the problem must lie in a cleaner domestic coal supply, otherwise the volume of spoil to be removed must necessitate additional labour and transport. Conversely, if the spoil is reduced, to normal quantities, we can handle it without difficulty in the usual collection routine.

The Direct Labour Scheme completed eighteen months operation at the end of the year, and it was agreed to extend it next April, provided the vehicle was delivered in time, to include Burnhope, Peartree Holmside and Greencroft areas and also Railway Terrace, Hamsteels.

Having regard to all the circumstances, the scheme is working satisfactory at a cost of £11 0 2 - 4½ per house per annum.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

	Informal Notices.	Formal Notices.	Nuisances Abated.
Foul Conditions.....	119	-	18
Structural Defects	596	-	423
Overcrowding	3	-	-
Dairies and Milk Shops..	17	-	14
Cowsheds	76	-	54
Bakehouses.....	1	-	1
Slaughterhouses.....	4	-	4
Ashpits and privies	35	-	22
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	174	-	174
Waterclosets.....	10	-	9
Defective Yard Paving.....	14	-	14
Drainage Faults.....	87	-	62
Water Supply	30	-	15
Pigsties.....	-	-	-
Animals improperly kept.	7	-	7
Smoke Nuisances.....	2	-	2
Offensive Trades....	-	-	-
Other Nuisances.....	135	-	133
	1210	-	952

The schedule overleaf gives details of the inspections carried out during the year.

	Meat and other Food Inspecting & Slaughter- houses.	Meat Shops.	Housing.	Vermineous Premises.	Drainage.	Refuse Removal & Salvage.	Refuse Tips.	Sanitary Accommodation.	Conversions.	I, D & Disin- festation.	Farms & Cowsheds.	Milk Samples	Ice - Cream.	Offensive Trades.	Factories.	Bake-houses.	Water Supplies.	Vermine.	Other Matters.	TOTAL
Burnhope, Peartree & Holmside.	2	-	91	11	19	155	11	52		7	10	2	-				27	35	55	478
Lanchester - Malton, Greencroft & Maiden Law.	4	1	97	15	31	52	20	19	2	8	32	4	3	6	4	-	10	15	32	355
Cornsay - Quebec, Hamsteels, Hedleyhope & Hedleyhill.	5	-	134	3	49	79	9	38	7	4	18	-	-	-	1	-	7	4	41	399
Esh Colliery	-	-	7	-	3	49	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	83
Langley Park, Esh Village and Hill Top.	29	1	137	19	25	55	20	34	4	11	4	2	4	-	4	-	5	11	42	407
Satley & Butsfield.	1	-	33	-	9	3	-	2	-	1	33	5	-	-	-	-	45	-	7	139
Castleside, Rowley and Knitsley.	1	-	53	1	43	58	28	33	25	2	13	1	-	2	5	-	33	1	26	335
Waskerley & Muggleswick	-	-	14	-	7	142	-	5	1	-	12	2	-	-	4	-	15	-	4	206
	43	2	576	49	186	593	106	183	40	33	122	16	7	8	18	-	142	57	212	2,402

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

During the year another new industry was started in the area, that of clothing manufacture. The firm concerned took over the premises previously used as a smallpox hospital, and at the end of the year the work was well established. Naturally, by nature of the lay-out, these premises are much more congenial than those occupied by the other new industry in the village, in which case, the need for new premises properly constructed for factory production, is as urgent as ever.

At the end of the year the scheme to adapt the former British Legion Hall, Langley Park, as a factory-bakery was in hand, but materials and power supply difficulties indicated that it would be next year before production could be expected.

During the year three factories without power, two blacksmiths, and one joiner, went out of commission, while the new clothing factory came into operation.

The Castleside smelt mills again gave rise to trouble through grit and smoke created by recovery of copper by burning off the outer covering of electric cable. To solve the difficulty, since the work must go on, it was suggested that part of this recovery process should be removed to some place remote from the village and negotiations to use the derelict engine sheds at Waskerley, which are remote from the village were concluded.

SHOPS ACT.

No formal action was taken during the year.

HOUSING.

Some progress was made during the year with house building, in that houses were being completed at Burnhope, 36, while work was in progress at Lanchester with 112 and Langley Park with 70 houses. At Castleside, the Council's contractor was engaged in the erection of ten houses.

Of the 36 houses proposed for Burnhope, 30 were completed and occupied during the year.

Private enterprise was responsible for completing 7 permanent houses during the year, all in the Castleside area.

At Moor Leazes Farm, a temporary house was approved to enable the farmhouse to be vacated for repairs and improvements, since it had been grievously disturbed by mining subsidence.

Langley West House Farm.

The original building being a large and inconvenient house, a scheme was agreed to adapt the accommodation into two self-contained houses, one for the tenant farmer and the other for a farm-worker. At the end of the year the farmhouse portion of the scheme had been completed.

Unfit Property.

The passing of another year has continued to accentuate the conditions under which so many families are compelled to continue to live in houses deemed unfit eight years ago. Indeed one is forced to the conclusion that, sympathetic as we may be, in relation to newly married people without a home of their own, the time is more than past when a proportion of the worst houses should be closed, and the tenants re-housed in a proportion of such new houses as are erected.

Unless something on these lines is made effective, in the near future, the vicious circle of unfit housing circumstances will continue with one tenant removing and another, not necessarily a resident of the area, moving into the unfit house. The contention is still put forward that labour and material to a large extent, are wasted on repairs to so much of this unfit property, in that the structure and materials are worn out, the repairs can only be regarded as temporary, so that any adverse weather conditions again perpetrate defects which in many cases previously have been repaired as effectively as the structure would permit.

The difficulties of those living under such conditions are such that they bear no resemblance to the provision of a decent, pleasant family life that is conducive to the contentment and healthy environment that is an essential of the present and future citizens of a community.

CIVIL BUILDING CONTROL AND HOUSING REPAIRS.

The work associated with the inspection of proposed work, the issue of licences and the check up on the finished project, engaged a major part of the time of the department during the year. The speed of accomplishment of works was of course generally governed by the material supplies, thus, what was regarded once as a minor detail insofar as time of completion was concerned, has now become a speculation if the work involves much in the way of new materials.

During the year, 195 licences involving a total cost of \$11,009 were dealt with, 146 licences appertaining to housing at a cost of \$8,344 and 49 with respect to premises other than houses at a cost of \$2,665.

The accumulation of arrears of routine housing repairs and general maintenance over the war years has by no means been overtaken as yet, and in this field alone, there remains much to be done.

With one aspect of such repairs and the high ruling costs of such works in relation to low rentage houses, we are finding many cases of where we have an Owner who cannot now afford to own the property. Especially is this the case where such property was bought pre-war as an investment, so that now, a not very extensive repair schedule swallows up the annual rental which hitherto provided for repairs and taxes, and left a margin for return on investment. Dealing with such cases provides a problem to fulfill the obligation as between landlord and tenant, and experience proves that a change of ownership which introduces new capital is the best solution to the problem. Where this does not occur it is logical that repairs are delayed, in that extended credit by the builder can hardly be expected when there is so much prompt payment work available.

Major works of reconstruction and modernisation with all necessary domestic facilities were carried out to the following properties during the year:-

Greenwell Farm Cottage	-	Modernised
Malton House Farm	-	Modernised
Broomshiels Hall Lodge	-	Reconstructed and Modernised
Hamsteels New Inn	-	Reconstructed and Modernised
Little Greencroft Farm Cottage	-	Reconstructed and Modernised
No. 3, Berkeley's Buildings, Maiden Law.	-	Reconstructed.
21, Quebec Street, Langley Park	-	Part of business premises adapted as a self-contained flat.

In course of routine repairs and minor alterations and improvements to houses, 502 visits of inspection were made during the year.

TENANCY CHANGES.

In pursuance of the policy of inspecting the furnishings and general suitability of prospective Council house tenants, 51 visits of inspection were made during the year, while 44 inspections of the vacated Council houses they were to occupy, were also made. The practical and psychological effect of this policy still proves worth while, serving as a deterrent and safeguard against the shiftless and dirty type of tenant, who takes a local authority's striving for better housing conditions for granted, and without respect for all it involves, and as an admonition against the indifferent type. Opinion has been expressed by other authorities that this inspection is a reflection upon the rights or integrity of the individual, but, in our experiences, that opinion has never once been upheld in the eleven years the policy has been in operation.

To the undesirable or careless tenant it presents the opportunity for stern admonition, while, conversely, to the clean careful, and house-proud prospective tenant, it provides for paying tribute to a pleasing condition, and the mead of pleasure that praise and approval gives to such a tenant can easily be imagined.

Of the inspections made, only two prospective tenants were referred back with an admonition for improvement in the general condition of the house before the Council house letting was confirmed.

It is accepted that there is a type of tenant who seems to have no idea of the second law of life, their attitude towards maintaining a clean home being practically negligible, and thus one is led to wonder whether the answer to the problem is a probationary site whereon the problem tenant must prove his worthiness of inhabiting a Council house before he is accepted as such, or, is it a matter of education by compulsion to good example. True it is that some cases improve with the change of environment, while others just fall back into the old ways, only being temporarily jolted out of it by a visit of inspection. The unhappy aspect of these cases is that the children, future citizens, grow up under a totally wrong impression of their obligation to themselves and their neighbours, because home influence is the most constant impression upon the young mind. One other aspect found, destroys the opinion that poverty and uncleanness are synonymous terms, because plenty instances occur where the household income is quite sufficient to justify a clean home, even if the value of the material contents of the house is sparse.

OVERCROWDING.

This position naturally seems to stabilise itself in a general way, in that, until the provision of sufficient additional houses are available, it will remain a constant. Natural family increase, and the marriage of young people who continue to reside with the parents of one or the other, constitute the chief causes, rather than cases of unrelated families living in the same house. True it is that there are cases where more than one family occupy a house, and while they do not legally overcrowd it from a point of view of permitted numbers, from a point of view of convenience, the accommodation, especially that of bedrooms, is usually taxed to the limit.

Once again, bearing in mind the feelings of the tenant in the matter, every advantage should be taken of adjusting families in tenancy changes to utilise the available housing accommodation to the fullest advantage as this method is preferable to joint tenancies occupying the available accommodation.

The circumstances of the new cases revealed during the year are as follows:-

No. of Houses involved	6
No. of Families involved	8
No. of Persons involved	41
No. of New cases	6

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1946,

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:-

1a. Total number of houses inspected under the Public Health or Housing Acts	226.
1b. Number of Inspections made for the purpose	343
2a. Number of houses recorded and inspected under Housing Act, 1936.	206
2b. Number of inspections made for the purpose	308
3. Number of houses found unfit for human habitation in all respects	23
4. Number of houses found not fit in all respects	203
5. Number of houses rendered fit by informal action	110

VERMINOUS PREMISES AND RODENT CONTROL.

During the course of inspection or at the instigation of the householders, 23 cases of vermin infestation were dealt with by the department during the year. An analysis of the cases revealed there were:-

INFESTATION BY	PROPERTY.	
	PRIVATE	COUNCIL,
Bed Bugs.	2	2
Black Beetles	3	3
Common Ants	"	2
Rats.	7	4

Bed Bugs:-

Almost all these cases pointed to an infested bed as the original source, and in three of the four instances, the article had been purchased second-hand. The eradication of the vermin was by stripping of the furnishings for treatment by a D.D.T. vermizine having a benzine base for residual action, while the beds were either destroyed or sterilised at the Hospital disinfecting station. In all cases the cost of treatment was charged to the occupant.

Black Beetles:-

Save one case, the remaining five were mild infestations and were subjected to the aforesaid treatment with a finality result. The biggest case dealt with was at the Central Isolation Hospital where it was found that the Central heating and steam pipe ducts below ground level were the seat of the infestation. Routine treatment however cleared the trouble which seemed to have been encouraged by contractors refuse having been left in the ducts during the course of construction.

Rats:-

In almost every case, the complaint was traced to a faulty drain, which was broken due to subsidence, and gave means of egress for the vermin to penetrate into the premises. Pre-baiting and poisoning, with the correction of the drain fault effectively dealt with the cases. Private Owners in these cases are charged 15/- per course of treatment which comprises of at least 4 visits.

Rodent Control - Sewer Treatment Scheme.

This scheme was carried out between 27th. May and 10th, August. It comprised two separate treatments with approximately one months interval between them, and using a different type of bait and poison for the respective treatments.

The whole system involving seventeen villages and their respective sewage works were treated and it was revealed that on the first and second treatments, 1,080 ounces and 173 ounces of poison bait were taken respectively, giving an estimated kill of 625 rats.

It was noted that sewers with a slow flow were mostly affected, indicating that a fast flowing sewer is not conducive to a settlement as a rodent feeding place, possibly because all possible food is too rapidly swept away to provide for leisurely and dependable feeding grounds.

The cost of the scheme, in which a total of 6 men were engaged, was £267 - 9 - 10 as against the estimate submitted to the Ministry of Food (Rodent Control Division), of £270.

As evidence seemed to point to the fact that the nearer to the works the more definite the infestation, so that by regular routine attention at the works and sewers adjacent thereto, much can be accomplished to control these vermin.

MILK SUPPLY.

The following are the main statistics relating to the milk supply in the area:-

No. of Registered Farms.	161
No. of Registered Cowsheds.	204
No. of Farms Registered during the Year,	1
No. of Farms Discontinued during the Year.	4
No. of Registered Producer/Wholesalers.	105
No. of Registered Producer/Retailers.	28
No. of Registered Producer/Wholesalers/Retailers.	14
No. of Registered Buttermakers.	12
No. Registered, but for own use only.	2

DESIGNATED MILK PRODUCTION.

No. of Producers of T.T. Milk.	4
No. of Producers of Accredited Milk.	50
No. of Supplementary licences issued for Pasteurised Milk.	1
No. of Licensed T.T. Retailers.	1

Some progress was made during the year with the improvement of milk production premises to an acceptable standard which generally meets with the wishes of the County Council, when the producer wishes to take up licence to produce a designated milk.

New cowsheds together with cooling and sterilising rooms were provided at the following farms:-

Manor House, Lanchester.
Glebe Farm, West Butsfield.
Woodburn Farm, Butsfield.
Springwell Farm, Butsfield.
Grange Farm, Cornsay Village.

At the following farms works of improvement were effected to existing premises to bring them up to standard for accredited milk production.

Morrow Edge, Burnhope.	-	One cowshed re-arranged internally Cooling and Sterilising rooms provided, One cowshed internally repaired.
Red House, Waskerley.	-	Cooling and Sterilising rooms provided to existing cowshed, Water supply piped into premises.

As a result of these structural improvements, five producers who had provided the necessary sterilising equipment, were granted Accredited Milk Production licences by the County Council. One Accredited producer discontinued as such during the year.

There are now 50 Accredited Producers in the area, with 4 certified as T.T. producers, a total of 54. This total indicates that 33.5% of the milk produced in the area is of designated standard.

Naturally the pre-war aim to get all the milk produced in the area up to designated standard; both as regards premises and production, has been slowed by labour and material difficulties, so that the final achievement of this aim is uncertain and can only progress by small measures.

During the year eight samples of milk were taken for test purposes, and only one failed to pass the Methylene Blue Test.

Thirty six sample reports were received from outside authorities into whose area milk from our district is wholesaled. Of these samples, 32 were quite satisfactory, and the remaining 4 enabled us to check up for the fault revealed by the sample. Generally this fault lay with imperfect cooling.

In former times it was re-assuring to be able to assess the quality of cleanliness of milk supplies from the individual farms, because we regularly took samples. Now however with different forms of authority taking samples, and the resultant information not being

made available to a local authority, short of duplicating the work and expense, we are not in a position to give an assesment of the quality of milk produced in the area with any degree of accuracy.

FOOD INSPECTIONS.

The meat supply being issued from the central slaughterhouse at Consett, the routine inspection is carried out there by the Consett staff.

Our work is more or less confined to the commodities in the shop or store, and the following table gives the detail of the commodities condemned as unfit for human consumption:-

SCHEDULE OF FOODSTUFFS CONDEMNED AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

COMMODITY	No.	CAUSE	WEIGHT. (lbs)
Mutton.	1	Decomposed, and Putrefactive odours.	59
Carcases of Mutton.	3	Discoloured & Wet condition	135
Tinned Meats.	10	Punctured or Blown Containers.	18½
Tinned Fish.	6	Punctured or Blown Containers.	6
Soups.	5	Punctured or Blown Containers.	5
Tinned Milks.	6	Punctured or Blown Containers.	3¼
Salmon.	3	Penetration of tins by rust.	2
Tinned Beans.	6	Blown or Punctured tins.	5½
Butter	1	Taint or Rancid.	3¼
Margarine.	40	Taint and Discoloured.	20
Bacon.	19½	Decomposition and Rancid.	19½
Tinned Peas.	5	Punctured & Blown Containers.	4½
Ham.	29	Decomposition & Bone Taint.	29
Tomatoes.	3	Leaky Container.	4¼

